

# BEGONIA CHATTER



<p><b>Astro Branch</b>  <b>American Begonia Society</b>  <i>4513 Randwick Drive</i>  <i>Houston, Texas 77092-8343</i>  <i>(713) 686-8539</i></p>	<p><i>Next Meeting:</i>  <b>DATE:</b> September 10, 2017  <b>TIME:</b> 2:00 PM  <b>PLACE:</b> West Gray Multi-Service Center  <b>PROGRAM:</b> Annual Plant Swap</p>
<p>September 2017 ISSUE</p>	<p><a href="http://www.begoniahouston.org">www.begoniahouston.org</a></p>

## ANNUAL PLANT SWAP

The September 10, 2017 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society will be held at the West Gray Multi-Service Center located at 1475 West Gray Street. Our meeting this month will be held in **Jays Room** (formally known as the Green Room). The Cactus and Succulent Society will be holding their Fall Plant Sale in the hallway and Activity Room 3. Members are welcome to arrive at 1:00 P.M. and the meeting will begin at 2:00 P.M.

We need to set up the room for our meeting, so if you can arrive a little early (about 12:30) to help out, it would be greatly appreciated.

President Janet Carpenter will preside over this meeting. There will be a short business meeting to catch everyone up on what is going on with National, Southwest Region and the Astros. Our Refreshment Hostesses for this meeting will be **Pat Hiscock, Jane Anderson and Kathleen Murphy**.

Our program this month is our ever popular **Annual Plant Swap**. Members this year are asked to limit the number of plants they bring to 1 or 2 plants per person. This year we would like only

plants in pots...no cuttings or plants dug out of the yard. We are going to be limited on space and perhaps tables, but have no fear we will make it work and have lots of fun doing it.

For our new members this is how it works. If you bring a plant or perhaps 2 you receive a (1) ticket. If you have a guest with you and they would like to participate they need to bring a plant or you can provide one for them. After the short business meeting we will request that each person that brought a plant(s) tell us what they brought, like the plants name, where it likes to grow in nature and your yard, if it's not blooming...does it? Once this is completed a ticket is drawn and then it begins until all the tickets are drawn. Once all the tickets are drawn the members decide if we want to start over or let them loose with what's left.

This is a fun program and we usually come away with something unusual or what we've always wanted.

We look forward to seeing you and sharing Harvey stories.

**See You There!**

## MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 6, 2017 MEETING OF THE ASTRO BRANCH

The August 6, 2017 meeting of the Astro Branch of the American Begonia Society was held at the West Gray Multi-Service Center located at 1475 West Gray Street in Activity Room 1. The meeting was called to order by President, Janet Carpenter, at 2:10 P.M. Janet thanked everyone for attending and welcomed guests **Gina Gottselig, Maria Taylor, Toby Hale and Tim Granger.**

Refreshments for this meeting were kindly provided by **Midge Gorman** and **Eddie Litchfield.** In September the refreshments will be provided by **Pat Hiscock, Jane Anderson** and **Kathleen Murphy.**

The Minutes from the July meeting were in the Begonia Chatter and were approved with corrections. The statement about Brenda Andrews' propagation method was incorrect. Please see the correct explanation of her propagation and transplanting technique at the end of these minutes. She is giving an excellent and very detailed description that should be much easier for us to follow.

Tom Keepin gave the Treasurer's report and our balance is still healthy. Sunshine lady, Ruby Lewellyn, was not at this meeting, but she sent cards that we passed around and signed. One was for Don Miller in memory of his mother, Vera, who passed away recently and the other was for Fred Bones whose wife, Frances passed away recently. Fred and Frances were members of the Astro Branch. We also learned that Brenda Andrews' brother recently passed away and all were saddened to hear this. Additionally, Charles Jaros and Normand Dufresne, both major contributors to our American Begonia Society, have recently died. In light of these sad events, Cheryl proposed that the club make a donation to the Begonia Species Bank in their memory. It was proposed that we donate \$1,000.00 which was seconded and approved by acclimation.

Tom asked how many members did not receive the Begonia Chatter Newsletter this month and

quite a few raised their hands. There was some kind of problem with sending so Tom asked that IF we have not received it by the Tuesday before the meeting we should email him and he will send it again.

Janet asked the group for someone to help Kathleen with the cooler and water at our meetings as they are quite heavy and it is becoming too difficult for her to do. No one volunteered, so it was decided that the hostesses will just add a gallon of water to the soft drinks they bring each month.

Tom announced that if we want to make a donation to the Fort Worth Begonia Species Bank we should send the check directly to Debbie Garrett and *make the check payable to the Southwest Region* so she will be able to deposit for the species bank. Otherwise it gets tied up and it takes to long for Debbie to get the money she needs. **Debbie Garrett, 3220 Botanic Garden Blvd., Ft. Worth, TX 76107.**

Tom brought a B. 'Carmel Browne' which he hybridized. This was pictured in the latest Begonian on pages 130 and 131. Tom explained a bit about the plant and the parents he used to hybridize it. It is a cross between a thick stem and a rhizomatous begonia. He also showed two examples of B. 'Chingipingii' which was discovered on an island in the Philippines. It must be near water to grow and can be grown in a terrarium. He also showed a B. 'Flamingo Queen' and B. 'Matchmaker' which JJJ Greenhouses continues to mix labels on. He and Cheryl explained that, although they are very similar, they are different plants. B. 'Flamingo Queen' is larger and has lighter green leaves. Also, the leaf comes to a point on its TOP, is outlined in light green and has red veins on the back. It also has larger and brighter inflorescences. It can get quite huge. It is an Australian hybrid by Ross Bolwell. B. 'Matchmaker' was hybridized by Walter Dworkin in 1992. Its leaves are reddish on the back.

Brenda Andrews showed members trays of plants she had put down in May and June (using the method she showed at the July meeting). These were already quite large and beautiful plants. Tom will take them home and put them in his greenhouse to bring back for the club when they get larger.

The program was then given by Tom Keepin and it was on Trailing/Scandent Begonias. He said this is a very small family of begonias – 26 species and about 35 cultivars since 1950. They are very shallow-rooted, self-branching, and can grow up to 8 feet long. They love to be fertilized. They can be identified as truly scandent if their leaves are arranged on the stem in a zigzag manner. He said many people don't like to grow them because they bloom seasonally, but they have beautiful, interesting foliage. They like dappled light and should be under potted. He explained that they are ALL TRAILING but SCANDENTS like to grow up a tree and TRAILING like to sprawl as a groundcover. Propagation is the same as cane-like begonias. They all make lovely hanging baskets. For this meeting, Tom had ordered a large sampling of trailing/scandent begonia cuttings from Debbie Garrett at the Fort Worth Begonia Species Bank. He and Cheryl pointed out that any of us members can request cuttings from the bank for free BUT it is STRONGLY ADVISED that a donation and thank-you note be sent. This is not mandatory but It would certainly be the correct gesture for receiving such lovely cuttings and would help defray the cost of mailing them. Members were allowed to take cuttings home to pot up. They were also offered to take samples of Black Gold Vermiculite that Sue Botts had donated. This product is available from Cornelius Nursery. It was then time for our drawings for Door Prize, Name Tag, and Raffle plants and the winners were:

**Door Prize:**

Acalypha hispida (chenille plant) - Won by guest Toby Hale

B. 'Jive' – was won by guest Gina Gottselig

Covered Glass Terrarium - won by guest Maria Taylor

Glass vase – won by Gloria Hunter

**Name Tag:**

B. 'Brazilian Lady' – won by Donna Robert

B. 'Jean Pernet' – won by Donna Williams

**Raffle:**

B. 'Flamingo Queen' – won by Tony Robert

B. 'Matchmaker' – won by Malcolm McCorquodale.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:43 P.M.

Respectfully submitted  
Donna Williams, Secretary



**Brenda Andrew's Propagation and Transplanting Technique (in her own words)**

The mixture I use as my propagation mix for the 2" plastic cups is: Sunshine Brand potting mix LC1 (this is a fine screened potting mix). I have a 6 inch green nursery pot (the kind your plants come in) and I use 3-4 scoops LC1 of this size pot, which almost fills my storage container. I then add 1 c. perlite, and 1 c. vermiculite. Mix those well and then add enough distilled water to make the mixture as moist as I like it—not wet, but moist. I then let it sit 3-4 hours or overnight to allow the moisture to distribute throughout my mix... After that time, I check the moisture again. If it needs more moisture, I add more distilled water 1-2 c at a time, until the moisture level is where I want it. If it is too wet, I add another 1-2 c. of LC1. After filling the plastic cups with the potting mixture, I insert a cutting and name tag. I then water the cups with **Supershrive**, 1 drop per gallon of distilled water, to settle the potting mix around the cutting. I use a squeeze bottle (the kind you put mustard or mayonnaise in) to do this watering in, or you can use a spray bottle. **Make sure each plant cup has a name tag in it.**

I then add ½-1" moistened perlite to the bottom of my Ziploc propagation box, level it out, and settle the 2" cups close together in that mixture, twisting to make sure they are imbedded in the perlite. The moistened perlite holds the cups in place so that they don't turn over every time I move the box and also adds a moist atmosphere.

When the cuttings reach the top of the Ziploc propagation box, I transfer the cuttings from the 2” plastic cups to 4” pots. I use Miracle Grow Potting Mix (nothing added just plain) and water the cutting in with 1 drop **Superthrive** or **BR61** diluted half strength. Again, I use the squeeze bottle to do this. I make up 1 gallon of distilled water with 1 drop of **Superthrive** or 1 tsp **BR61** to water the potting mix and settle it around the roots. Put the gallon of fertilized water in a bucket and then take off the top to my squeeze bottle and submerge until it is filled. Then, screw the top back on and proceed watering in the plants. If you are putting the 4” pots outside, be sure to water every day as the 4” pots will dry out overnight. Remember, they have been in a controlled atmosphere and are fragile. If you do happen to have a deep clear plastic box, put your 4” pots in this and open the box for several hours every day to harden your plants off, adding more time every other day he the lid is off. Eventually, you can take them out of that box and raise them on the shelf or bench. Remember, they have to be watered more frequently than your larger potted plants as the 4” pots dry out much quicker.

## PRUNING, PLANTING AND TRANSPLANTING

### September

1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Capricorn
6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup>	Pisces
10 <sup>th</sup> & 11 <sup>th</sup>	Taurus
14 <sup>th</sup> & 15 <sup>th</sup>	Cancer
23 <sup>rd</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup>	Scorpio
28 <sup>th</sup> & 29 <sup>th</sup>	Capricorn

### October

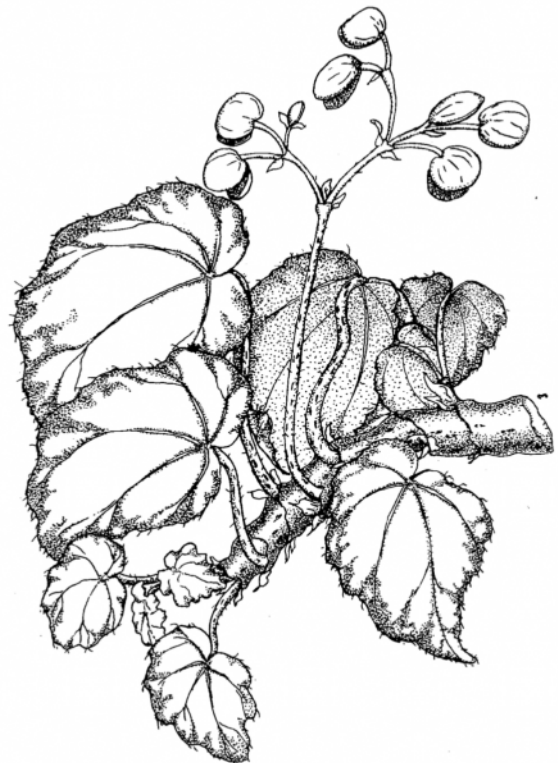
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup>	Pisces
7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	Taurus
11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup>	Cancer
20 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Scorpio
25 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> & 27 <sup>th</sup>	Capricorn
30 <sup>th</sup> & 31 <sup>st</sup>	Pisces

- Planting and Transplanting are best done in Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces with Cancer being the best.
- Best Pruning for quick growth is first Taurus and then Capricorn.

## WEATHER FORECAST FOR SEPTEMBER 2017

According to the United States Weather Service, Houston and surrounding area fall in Region 7 of the National Weather Map. Here is what they predict our weather will be like for the month September

Our temperatures will be slightly above normal with precipitation near normal. Our average temperatures should range from 74 degrees in the North to 80 degrees in the South. Our coolest September temperatures will be September 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> thru 13<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> thru 26<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. Our warmest September temperatures will be 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> thru 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. There will be a few storms at 3 to 4 day intervals, with heavier storms near the Gulf. There will be a high hurricane potential about September 10<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> thru 20<sup>th</sup>. September will be Humid.



## IN MEMMORY OF DIANNA WILKERSON

It is with a sad heart that I have news to impart. Dianna Wilkerson our long distance member from Oklahoma and personal friend to many Astro members passed away on Saturday, September 2, 2017 mid-morning while getting dressed to go see her college almmater football team play in Norman, OK. From what Kenny told me Dianna passed quickly, quietly and peacefully. Dianna's only words were "I don't feel right". Dianna's email address was [thebegoniafiend@cox.net](mailto:thebegoniafiend@cox.net), this address pretty much sums up her feelings for begonias. There is or was not a begonia anywhere available that she didn't somehow manage to obtain in some form. Being confined to a wheelchair was not a deterrent to Dianna. She worked in her greenhouse, went to begonia conventions (especially for the plant sales) where she helped with Classification and Registration (when needed) and also in the plant sale room getting the plants ready for the sale.



Dianna and husband Kenny were the designated liaisons to the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens Begonia Species Bank for the ABS and Southwest Region. When they made their visits to Ft. Worth, Dianna would work side by side with volunteer Bobby Price while Kenny took pictures. In addition to being long time, long distance members of the Astro Branch Kenny and Dianna would make the trip from Choctaw, OK every year for the Astro's January meeting. They were also long time members of the Barkley Branch. Meetings were held at their home and fund raisers were held in

Oklahoma City. When I first met Dianna and Kenny I was giving a program to the Barkley Branch ...While chatting during refreshments Dianna told me that it annoyed her when people felt sorry for her. Dianna said: Yes! I have diabetes and have lost one leg, but I look at it this way "God may have closed the door but, he opened a large window where I found begonias." It makes me sad that I will not have my friend to chat with but by the same token I am glad she is no longer suffering. I am sure she is right up there in Heaven with Charles Jaros supervising the Heavenly Begonia Garden. We will miss her.

Tom Keepin



Birthday wishes go out to all our members  
born in this month of September.

Pat Perry	September 1 <sup>st</sup>
Debbie Peterson	September 9 <sup>th</sup>
Fukumi Smith	September 12 <sup>th</sup>
Kenny Wilkerson	September 8 <sup>th</sup>
Susan Willis	September 9 <sup>th</sup>

"Life is a story you write as you go. Your story is uniquely you – interesting and inspiring and as it continues unfolding, may it always be deeply rewarding."

## ASTROS Meeting, August 6, 2017



Beautiful Begonias propagated by Brenda Andrews



Gail Warren selling raffle tickets



Irene and Mike Bragg with Brenda Andrews



Tom, Maria, Toby, Tim, and Gail



Tom beginning his presentation



Tom discussing B. 'Flamingo Queen' and B. 'Matchmaker'



Donna Robert with B. Brazilian Lady'



Donna Williams with B. 'Jean Pernet'



Toby Hale, with *Acalypha hispida* (Chenille plant)



Kathleen Murphy, Gina Gottselig (with B. 'Jive' ) and Maria Taylor.



Tony Robert with B. 'Flamingo Queen'



Malcolm McCorquodale with B. 'Matchmaker'